

ABSTRACT

An email system includes a server and client applications operatively coupled to the server. Each application operates on behalf of a given email address and the server forwards messages among the applications based on email addresses specified for the messages. When a recipient application that assumes a recipient email address has a status change in its message receiving and handling mode, that change is communicated from the recipient application to the server and is recorded in a status table indexed under email addresses. When the user of another application (i.e., sender application) wants to send a message to the recipient email address and has specified the recipient email address, the sender application queries the table in the server for the current status of the recipient email address by sending an inquiry to the table with the recipient email address so that the status of the recipient email address is determined before a message is sent to the recipient email address.